

Los Angeles County Office of Education
MathStar Supports the Mathematics and Science Initiative

Goal Area: Improving Teacher Knowledge

Project Summary

MathStar is a federal Star Schools project governed by four managing partners: Colorado Department of Education, New Mexico Department of Education, Monterey County Office of Education (serving Northern California), and Los Angeles County Office of Education (serving Southern California). Extremely rural, isolated schools are served, as well as schools in urban locales.

The project features an intensive collaboration between middle schools, colleges and universities, and educational service agencies in the four areas. In addition, the MathStar administration and managing partners leverage their resources and knowledge by collaborating with other local, state, and federal initiatives and businesses seeking to improve middle school mathematics. No Child Left Behind is supported through emphasis on low performing schools; local control of project initiatives and interventions; and research-based teaching and learning strategies.

Project Purpose

MathStar's goal is to improve the teaching and learning of middle school mathematics through the use of interactive technologies. Key topics involve middle school geometry and algebraic concepts. Mastery of mathematics content is stressed. Services include in-person and online professional development, Web resources, video/television, and new media (CD-ROM, DVD, broadband). The project provides explicit support for state curriculum standards.

Accomplishments / Results

In the last year, MathStar has provided ongoing professional development to 417 teachers serving 41,775 students in the three states. The need is so great and the desire of teachers to improve their content knowledge and teaching ability is so strong, that MathStar has been transitioning to development of elearning opportunities in order to reach more teachers. In addition to online discussion and more "traditional" means of online communication, MathStar currently offers an online multimedia course on integers and differentiated instruction, as well as a moderator's course to ensure an effective online learning experience. Four more online courses are in development and will be available in 2003-04. University credit for the courses is provided by the Rossier School of Education at the University of Southern California.

Plan for Next Twelve Months

MathStar will continue to provide in-person and online professional development for middle school mathematics teachers. Online course participation will grow and provide ongoing, rigorous professional development for teachers. The project is also developing mathematics education leadership among participating teachers and administrators.

Project Director

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